

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION ALPHONSE JUILLAND

(1923 -2000)

Alphonse Juilland, Professor Emeritus of French and Italian, died on June 30th, 2000 at the age of 77. Born in Bucharest, Romania, and raised in Switzerland, he graduated from Bucharest University summa cum laude, and earned his doctorate from the Sorbonne in Paris in 1951. He was recruited to Stanford in 1961 from the University of Pennsylvania. He was an active member of a committee that recommended the establishment of a program that later became the department of Linguistics, and served as head of the Department of French and Italian from 1973 to 1979 and again from 1982 to 1984. He was appointed to the William H. Bonsall Chair in 1978. In 1975 and 1988 he was honored by the French government for his contributions to French culture and education in the United States, first as Chevalier then as Officier in l'Ordre des Palmes Academiques,

Enumerating Juilland's prizes and honors is not enough. What shone through in his life was his truly living the life of a dedicated humanist. In his view, maintaining the humanist ideal was an avocation, not a mere job. So was defending conservatism. In both cases he sought to uphold faith, which, according to an interview with a campus newspaper in 1985, he saw as the guardian of academic freedom. By contrast, he distrusted liberalism, for putting "a premium on fact and reason", and being, he felt, subject to political partisanship. His conservatism was not just theory, but lively activity. For example, he organized a faculty petition against a committee to reassess the University's relationship to the Hoover Institution. There was a burning fire in him, but it burned quietly.

His being a conservative politically did not prevent him from being one of the early practitioners of the use of computers to study language data quantitatively. Among his several books were a frequency dictionary of Italian words, a study of the difficulties of defining the concept "word", and an investigation of two competing approaches to the Romanian verb system, all published in the nineteen-seventies.

Juilland was acclaimed after his retirement from teaching in 1989 not only for books on the structure and etymologies of verbs and adjectives in the writings of the French novelist Louis-Ferdinand Céline, but also for works on track and field records. He himself won several prizes as a senior sprinter. One could enumerate these prizes. But the key issue is rather his living up in many ways to the tradition of *mens sana in corpore sano* 'a sound mind in a healthy body.'

With his grey beard, pipe, elegant clothes and upright gait, he struck a sharp contrast to many of his colleagues, none more than at graduation when he loved to sport his doctoral regalia from the Sorbonne, with its bright yellow “chef’s hat.”

His beloved wife, Ileana Juilland, occasionally taught Romanian and French in the Department of French and Italian. He is survived by his daughter Marie-Jeanne Juilland-Johnson of Redwood City; two brothers, Paul of Lima, Peru, and Jean of Laguna Niguel, California; and five nieces and nephews.

Committee:

Julius Moravcsik
Elizabeth Closs Traugott, Emerita